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Going for Zero

1 message

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To: jwmartin@natickma.org

Thu, Jan 23, 2020 at 10:59 AM



*net
zero*

Nothin'. Nada. Zip. Zilch.

There are a hundred ways to say "zero", and 2020 is dedicated to my favorite one: [Net Zero](#).

Natick's goal is to be Net Zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050. Snazzy, right? Here's what it actually means: we will work to (1)

reduce Natick's GHG emissions to the greatest extent possible (through energy efficiency projects, transitioning from fossil fuel, etc.) and (2) balance out the remainder through GHG removal (tree planting, agricultural practices, etc).

Sound crazy? It's not.

- On Tuesday, Governor Baker asked the state to embrace the same goal (net zero emissions by 2050) during his State of the State speech.
- 30+ cities and towns in metro Boston are already working toward similar goals, including every single one of our neighbors. Every. Single. One.
- Natick's favorite (?) public utility, Eversource, has committed to becoming carbon neutral (another term for net zero) by 2030.
- 9 states across the country, along with DC and Puerto Rico, have enacted policies to move toward deep GHG reductions and fossil fuel free energy by 2050 or earlier.
- And last week, Microsoft announced it will be carbon negative by 2030, and – get this – that it will remove the equivalent of all of its historic emissions by 2050. Wowzers!

So how will Natick do it? We're working to answer that question. This winter we are bench marking community-wide GHG emissions, and will be drafting a Net Zero Action Plan for your feedback this spring. Key to the process is public input, and we'll be calling on you to ensure the plan is in line with Natick's aspirations and abilities.



Want to learn more and get involved? Here is the [presentation](#) we shared with the Board of Selectmen, Board of Health, School Committee, Conservation Commission and Planning Board this month. Additional information and a timeline of the planning process is available [here](#).

It's going to be a busy, interesting and epic year.

Let's do this!

– Jillian Wilson Martin, Natick Sustainability Coordinator



**but wait,
there's more**





Dam News

Earlier this month, the Town Engineer withdrew the DPW's [application to repair the South Natick Dam](#), a project that would result in the removal of 60 trees on the earthen berm known as Grove Park.

The Town is now evaluating the feasibility of decommissioning the spillway, which would allow the trees to stay. They have completed the first step, which involved sediment testing. [The sediment tests found that containment levels were low and would not preclude decommissioning](#). The next step is to develop an alternative analysis that further assesses the history of the dam, how the river would change, and other impacts of a potential removal. Findings from this analysis should be available this summer. You can keep an eye out for them on the Town's project site, [here](#).

I've been following this project closely and it has been incredibly interesting to learn about the dam's history, purpose, risks and much more. It's also been fascinating to learn about the costs, benefits and process of dam removal. The Division of Ecological Restoration has some great resources on the topic and I encourage you to check them out [here](#).



It's alive!

At long last, Natick's Cole Center electric vehicle charging station is ready for you! It took us a few months to get Eversource's meter installed, but, as of last night, you can charge here. Charging costs are

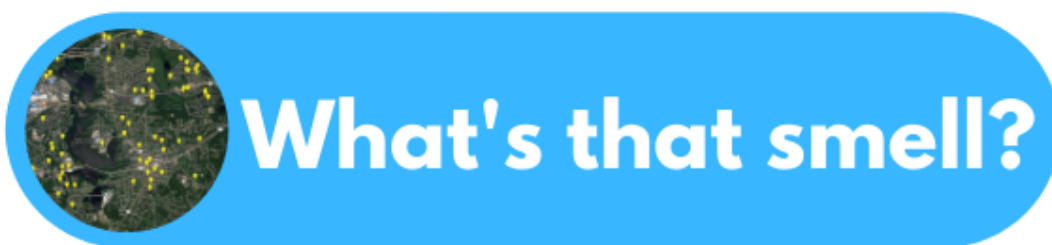
currently set at 18 cents per kWh and will be reviewed and adjusted periodically.



You can soon get compost bags at cost (\$3) at your favorite blue bag stores!

They are currently available at Tilly and Salvy's and Wegmans should have them in their store in a couple weeks. We are in the process of reaching out to every store, and have commitments from Roche Bros and Stop and Shop to participate too. As a reminder, [you can also order bags directly from Black Earth's online store](#) (note, their pricing is different).

As part of this transition, we will be phasing out the sale of bags at Public Works. They currently have a low inventory of bags and once those are gone, we will not be re-stocking.



As of 2018, there were [94 natural gas leaks here in Natick](#). These leaks harm our health, kill our trees, and emit methane, a greenhouse gas that is 86x more potent than carbon. They also cost us money as Eversource passes the cost of the leaked gas on to us as natural gas customers, rolling it into the price we pay every month on our bills.

Long story short, gas leaks are gross and I'd love to partner with you to do something about them. If you're interested, please consider joining me in Weston tonight (Thursday, 1/23) to learn about the strategies

communities can take to replace aging, leak-prone gas pipes with interconnected street-segment geothermal systems scaled to meet the needs of various neighborhoods. It sounds really interesting and the speaker, Audrey Schulman, who worked to map the utility-reported gas leaks across Massachusetts in her role as the Exec. Director of [HEET](#) in Cambridge. Here are the details on the meeting.

Thur., Jan. 23rd, 7:00 – 8:30 pm

First Parish Church in Weston, UU

[349 Boston Post Road Weston, MA](#)



I'm kind of a TED nerd, and I'm a huge fan of TEDx Natick – and not just because they compost their leftovers at lunch. :)

If you haven't purchased your tickets to the TEDx Natick event, I encourage you to take a look at their [lineup](#) and check your schedule for this Saturday. Natick's very own Trish Umbrell, the Director of Operations at the Natick Community Organic Farm, will be speaking. I hear she is going to be talking about her experience on the farm and what this treasure means to the community. No doubt it will be terrific!

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